

Section 3

Assessing the CAHSEE Reading Standards

The English language arts (ELA) part of the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) assesses designated California content standards in reading for grades 9 and 10, with the addition of two standards from grade 8. The reading section of the ELA part of the CAHSEE uses a multiple-choice format to assess three English-language arts strands: Word Analysis, Reading Comprehension, and Literary Response and Analysis. The writing section assesses three additional strands: Writing Strategies, Writing Conventions, and Writing Applications. The reading strands and standards are discussed in this section of the guide, and the writing strands and standards are discussed in Section 4.

Reading Passages

The test questions on the reading section of the CAHSEE are based on reading texts similar to those that students encounter during their high school years. Each form of the test includes about 50 percent informational texts and 50 percent literary texts. Informational texts include expository, persuasive, and functional passages. The latter include consumer materials (e.g., warranties, advertisements), workplace documents (e.g., memoranda and announcements), and “how to” articles or written instructions. The literary texts on the CAHSEE include classical and contemporary stories, poems, and dramatic literature as well as literary nonfiction texts (e.g., essays, autobiographies, biographies, and memoirs that are written in a literary style). The passages on each test form include a mix of commissioned (newly written) passages and previously published literature. In some cases two texts that deal with the same topic or theme are included.

Beginning with the spring 2002 administration of the CAHSEE, there are five to eight items associated with each reading passage and three to four test questions associated with each writing strategies passage. The length of passages on the examination depends on the type of text, but in general passages are between 300 and 1200 words, with an average length of 600 words. Usually no more than one lengthy text is included in each form.

Reading Constructs Measured by the CAHSEE

The CAHSEE is focused on English language arts constructs that are taught and assessed throughout elementary, middle, and high school. The underlying cognitive constructs for the reading strands in the California content standards are shown in Table 5. The *Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools* (1999) emphasizes that students must be fluent readers by the end of third grade. A primary assumption in the reading content standards is that students have mastered early skills (concepts of print, phonemic awareness, phonics, and sight words) that are foundational and required for later, more complex higher order skills and understandings (background knowledge, vocabulary, syntax, text structure, comprehension monitoring, and reorganizing text). The English language arts section of the CAHSEE requires the student to decode words fluently and automatically in order to understand the concepts presented in printed text. The CAHSEE test question writers and reviewers verify that each question measures the appropriate construct as well as the identified content standard.

Table 5
Reading Constructs Measured by the CAHSEE

Strand	Construct
Word Analysis	Fundamental skills of reading: word analysis, fluency, and systematic vocabulary development
Reading Comprehension	Reading comprehension: reading, understanding, and analyzing grade-level appropriate informational materials
Literary Response and Analysis	Literary response: reading, understanding, and analyzing grade-level appropriate literary materials

The following pages of the Teacher Guide discuss the reading strands and content standards included in the CAHSEE. For most of the standards, there is also a discussion of a sample released test question. The three reading strands are

Word Analysis
Reading Comprehension
Literary Response and Analysis

Teachers will find this section of the guide useful in understanding how the California content standards are assessed on the CAHSEE. A thorough understanding of the standards and the test questions associated with them will help teachers focus their instruction on the content standards and better prepare students for the exam.

The Word Analysis Strand

To demonstrate achievement in this CAHSEE strand, students must know the meaning of words at the tenth grade reading level. All target vocabulary words are located within reading passages, either informational or literary. Students are expected to know the meaning of tenth grade words whether or not the passage provides context clues. Test questions may include a phrase or sentence quoted from the passage, or they may simply refer to a paragraph, line number, stanza, or scene number in which the word may be found.

Some test questions in the Word Analysis strand require students to determine the meaning of words that are above the tenth grade level. When these more difficult words are tested, students are expected to use appropriate strategies for determining word meaning. One such strategy is the use of context clues. In test questions requiring this strategy, there is sufficient context within the passage for students to derive the meaning. Target words are presented in the test question with the phrase or sentences in which they are used in the passage. Students are expected to use the phrase or sentence, as well as the entire passage, to help them determine the meaning of the unknown word.

A second vocabulary strategy is the analysis of affixes and roots to determine meaning. Target words contain common roots, prefixes, or suffixes appropriate to the tenth grade. Students are expected to use knowledge of roots and affixes to determine the meaning or to identify the meaning of the individual word parts.

Test questions in the Word Analysis strand may also address the connotation of words or phrases within reading passages. The target words usually are adjectives or adverbs that suggest qualities of people, animals, or actions. However, the target words may also be verbs with a clear connotative interpretation.

The California content standards tested on the CAHSEE also require students to determine the meaning of figurative words or phrases, including idioms, metaphors, and similes. Test questions do not ask students to identify the terms *idiom*, *metaphor*, and *simile*, but they require students to use context clues and knowledge of denotative meanings to determine the meaning of the figurative language.

The following pages discuss the California content standards in the Word Analysis strand on the CAHSEE.

Strand	Word Analysis	Read this sentence from the selection.
Standard	10.1.1	“Familiarity breeds contempt.”
Identify and use the literal and figurative meanings of words and understand word derivations.		What does the word <i>contempt</i> mean in this sentence from the story?
		<p>A alarm</p> <p>B dislike</p> <p>C emotion</p> <p>D confusion</p>

CAHSEE test questions in standard 10.1.1 may focus on one of the several components of this content standard: the literal meaning of words, the figurative meaning of words, or word derivations.

Literal Meaning of Words

Test questions that focus on this component of standard 10.1.1, shown in italics in the text of the standard reprinted above, require students to demonstrate their knowledge of words at or below the tenth grade reading level. The meaning of brief phrases may also be tested. Target vocabulary may or may not be supported by context clues. The tested vocabulary will be important to an understanding of the overall meaning of the passage in which it is used. The tested words on the examination are drawn from either informational or literary texts.

The sample test question is based on the passage “A Word in the Hand,” which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. The question is representative of others under this standard in requiring students to know the literal meaning of words at or below the tenth grade level. The sentence from the passage is included in the stem of the question so that students who wish to see the word *contempt* in its context do not have to take time to search the entire passage. However, little or no context clues are provided for this word in the passage, and students should recognize that the best of the given definitions of this word is *dislike* in option B. Students should also recognize that options A, C, and D—*alarm*, *emotion*, and *confusion*—are not possible definitions of *contempt* even though they could fit logically within the sentence “Familiarity breeds contempt.”

Strand	Word Analysis	What does the phrase <i>disappear over the horizon</i> mean in the following sentence?
Standard	10.1.1	
<i>Identify and use the literal and figurative meanings of words and understand word derivations.</i>		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> The reward in working with a trained falcon is the companionship of creatures that can choose at any time to disappear over the horizon forever. </div>
		<p>A return to the falconer</p> <p>B abandon the falconer</p> <p>C go behind some trees</p> <p>D fly very high</p>

Figurative Meaning of Words

Test questions that focus on this component of standard 10.1.1, shown in italics in the text of the standard reprinted above, require students to determine the figurative meaning of words or phrases. The target vocabulary is at or below grade level, with the words used figuratively rather than literally. Test questions assess students' ability to interpret the meaning of idioms, metaphors, and similes, as well as analogies that are embedded in reading passages. The target words or phrases are drawn from either informational or literary texts.

The sample test question is based on the passage "On Becoming a Falconer," which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. Students are asked to determine the meaning of the idiomatic phrase *disappear over the horizon* in terms of the context in which it is used. Because students may require the context in order to answer the question correctly, the full sentence from the passage has been quoted in the stem. Students should recognize that the context clues, including the word *forever* and the statement that the falcon may *choose* to disappear, indicate that *disappear over the horizon* in this instance is best interpreted as choice B, "abandon the falconer." In this context, the literal interpretation, that the falcon will simply no longer be visible, does not give the full meaning of the phrase. Both options C and D offer a literal interpretation and thus are not correct in this context. Option A represents a misreading that relies on the first part of the context sentence, which focuses on the companionship offered by a the falcon.

Strand	Word Analysis	Read this sentence from this selection.
Standard	10.1.1	<p>In some pioneering experiments, researchers have studied the behavior of patients who have had their corpus callosum severed through surgery.</p>
Identify and use the literal and figurative meanings of words and understand word derivations.		What is the meaning of <i>severed</i> in this sentence?
		<p>A healed</p> <p>B split</p> <p>C examined</p> <p>D stretched</p>

Test questions that focus on this component of standard 10.1.1, shown in italics in the text of the standard reprinted above, focus on the student's ability to use word derivations and other important vocabulary strategies to understand the meaning of unfamiliar words. The target vocabulary is above grade level.

Word Derivations

For questions testing the use of word derivations, the target vocabulary contains common roots or affixes. Students are required to use knowledge of roots and affixes either to determine the meaning of the unfamiliar word or to identify the meaning of the common roots and affixes in the word.

Context Clues

CAHSEE test questions for standard 10.1.1 also may assess the student's ability to employ the strategy of using context clues to interpret the meaning of unknown words. In earlier grades, the California content standards use of context clues, and this foundational ability may also be tested on the CAHSEE. In test questions that assess the student's ability to use context clues, the target vocabulary is a word or phrase that is above grade level. Students are expected to use context clues to determine the meaning of the word. See Appendix E for a chart of the progression of this skill in the California content standards.

Both strategies, use of word derivations and use of context clues, will not be not tested in the same test question. Target words or phrases are drawn from either informational or literary texts.

The sample test question is based on the passage “A Brain Divided,” which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. This question requires students to use context clues to determine the meaning of a word that may or may not be familiar to them. The sentence in which the word appears is reproduced in the stem. However, students should be aware that for questions of this type they will find it helpful to use not only the immediate context that is provided with the test question but also the more general context of the entire passage. Each of the options in this test question makes apparent sense in the given sentence, but students who have absorbed other information in the passage will have little difficulty choosing option B, “split,” as the correct answer. Options A, C, and D represent misreadings of the contextual sentence and the overall passage, as these choices suggest that the surgical process was either beneficial (option A) or not injurious (options C and D).

Strand	Word Analysis	The words <i>casual</i>, <i>wander</i>, and <i>gaze</i> in paragraph 3 suggest a feeling of —
Standard	10.1.2 Distinguish between the denotative and connotative meanings of words and interpret the connotative power of words.	
		A determination. B solitude. C bewilderment. D relaxation.

CAHSEE test questions in this standard require students to understand the connotative meaning of words or phrases within a reading passage. The target vocabulary is at or below the tenth grade level. Words usually are adjectives or adverbs that suggest qualities of people, animals, or actions. However, verbs with connotative meaning may also be tested. Target words or phrases are drawn from informational or literary texts.

The sample question is based on the passage “A Day Away,” which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. The question focuses on the connotative overtones of three words in the passage. Students should recognize that because all three words carry a connotation of being informal and unhurried, the best choice is D, relaxation. Choice A, determination, is partially related to the meaning of the three words, but it can be ruled out because the concept of wandering is its opposite. Choices B and C, solitude and bewilderment, are not related to the meaning of the three words.

The Reading Comprehension Strand

To demonstrate achievement in this CAHSEE strand, students must demonstrate their ability to comprehend and interpret informational texts. These texts include a variety of genres: expository passages, persuasive essays, written instructions, workplace documents (materials young adults might encounter in an entry-level, part-time work setting), and consumer materials (warranties, product information, instruction manuals).

One important focus in this strand is the use of structural features in informational text. Students should understand the importance of these features and use them to aid comprehension. Structural features that may be addressed on the CAHSEE include titles, headings, bulleted or numbered lists, graphs, and tables of contents. Students should be able to use the structural features to understand the text, to analyze the author's purpose in using the specific features, and to determine how the features contribute to the reader's understanding of the text.

A second important focus within this strand is the critical analysis of informational texts. Students are asked to connect ideas within and among texts and to extend ideas through analysis, evaluation, and elaboration. Students should also be able to critique the internal logic of a text and to evaluate the credibility of an author's arguments—e.g., whether the author is relying primarily on personal opinion or research or whether there are assertions in the text for which the author provides little or no evidence.

Although most of the CAHSEE items within this strand assess the student's achievement of these critical analysis skills, others assess the foundational skills for the critical analysis of texts, as found in the California content standards in earlier grades. These skills include determining the main idea of the whole or part of a passage, identifying cause and effect relationships, identifying underlying comparisons, making logical predictions, and determining the author's purpose.

The Reading Comprehension strand also has a research component, requiring students to understand and identify the conventions of bibliographic citation. Students are not required to know a specific style, but they should be able to recognize those elements that are common among styles and are necessary for doing individual student research. Students also will be asked to recognize a research question that would be appropriate for use by high school students.

The following pages discuss the eight California content standards in the Reading Comprehension strand on the CAHSEE.

Strand	Reading Comprehension	According to the two boxes at the end of the document, which of these would be the BEST password?
Standard	8.2.1 Compare and contrast the features and elements of consumer materials to gain meaning from documents (e.g., warranties, contracts, product information, instruction manuals).	<p>A date of a wedding anniversary</p> <p>B your family nickname</p> <p>C the same number, repeated five times</p> <p>D the first letters in the title of your favorite book</p>

CAHSEE test questions in this standard require students to make use of structural features to locate or understand information. Students also may be asked to analyze the author's purpose in using specific structural features, or they may be asked to determine how the features contribute to the reader's understanding of the text. Questions are based on documents that a young adult might encounter as a consumer, including those named in this standard. The consumer texts used to assess this standard have explicit structural features such as titles, headings, numbering or bulleting, graphics, tables of content, indices, glossaries, works cited, and bibliographies.

The sample test question is based on the passage "How to Choose a Password," which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. The question requires students to locate information highlighted by a structural feature of the passage, i.e., the two boxes of summary information at the end of the document, and to apply this information to a new situation. The question provides four descriptions of possible passwords, and students should use the information in the boxes to determine which description represents an acceptable password. Choice D is the correct answer because in its use of first letters of words it resembles two of the examples in the second box. Choice A, "date of a wedding anniversary," can be eliminated by information in the first box, as it is similar to the example of the birth date. Choice B, "your family nickname," can be eliminated by observing the example of a nickname in the first box. Choice C, "the same number, repeated five times," can be eliminated by the example of the repeated letter in the first box.

Strand	Reading Comprehension	What is the order in which new movies are moved through the store?
Standard	10.2.1 Analyze the structure and format of functional workplace documents, including the graphics and headers, and explain how authors use the features to achieve their purposes.	<p>A from Hottest Hits to Film Library to Recent Releases</p> <p>B from Film Library to Hottest Hits to Recent Releases</p> <p>C from Hottest Hits to Recent Releases to Film Library</p> <p>D from Recent Releases to Film Library to Hottest Hits</p>

CAHSEE test questions in this standard are based on documents that young adults might encounter in an entry-level, part-time work setting. Students must be able to make use of structural features contained in these documents to locate or understand information. Students also may be required to analyze the author's use of the structural features or to determine how the features are an aid to reader understanding. The structural features that appear in the reading passages include titles, headings, numbering/bulleted, graphics, tables of content, indices, glossaries, works cited, and bibliographies.

The sample test question is based on the passage "Main Street Movies Employee Manual: Organizing Videos," which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. The question is based on the sections of the document under the subheadings *New Releases Wall* and *Film Library*. Students should read the document carefully in order to determine that the New Releases Wall has two sections, Hottest Hits and Recent Releases, and that videos are first placed in the Hottest Hits section and later moved to the Recent Releases section before being placed in the Film Library. Thus choice C is the correct answer. Students should learn to use structural features, such as the boldfaced titles in this passage, as aids in determining sequential information within a document. The other answer choices represent incorrect sequences for the movement of videos through the store.

Strand	Reading Comprehension	The following are references for sources of information about the brain. In which of them would you be MOST likely to find information on split-brain research?
Standard	10.2.2 Prepare a bibliography of reference materials for a report using a variety of consumer, workplace, and public documents.	<p>A Cerebellum: essential involvement in the classically conditioned eyelid responses. D.A. McCormick and R. Thompson. <i>Science</i> 223: 296-9 Ja 20 '99.</p> <p>B The forecasting brain: how we see the future. D.Loye. <i>Il por Futurist</i> I 8: 63-5 F '99.</p> <p>C Immunity: two sides of the brain. J.A. Miller. <i>Sci News</i> 126:3 S7 D 8 '00.</p> <p>D Rusty brains may need iron. <i>Prevention</i> 36:4 Ma '98.</p>

CAHSEE test questions in this standard cover its two main components: identification of appropriate reference materials and use of referencing conventions. Test questions that focus on the first component require students to use titles or descriptions of reference materials to determine their potential suitability for a given research task. Students should be able to use bibliographic references to help them choose a preliminary set of materials that is likely to be useful for additional research on a specific topic.

Other test questions under this standard require students to understand the widely used referencing conventions of works cited and bibliographic entries. Students should be able to recognize correct uses of these conventions. The references shown in the CAHSEE reading passages or test questions follow one of several accepted styles, and students are required to know elements that are common to most styles (e.g., “ed.” means “editor”; author’s last name comes first). Test questions are based on informational texts, including consumer, workplace, and public documents.

The sample test question is based on the passage “A Brain Divided,” which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. To answer this question successfully, students need to have grasped the main concept of the associated passage, that the brain has two parts with different functions. Students also should be able to use the titles of research sources to

infer their suitability for research on the given topic. Choice C is the correct answer, as it is the only choice that makes reference to the dual nature of the brain, which is the focus of the reading passage. Choice A uses some of the terminology in the associated passage, but the title indicates that the dual nature of the brain will not be the main focus of the article. Choices B and D have little or no relationship to the main idea of the passage and therefore cannot be correct.

Strand	Reading Comprehension	Which question could MOST effectively be developed into a research paper?
Standard	10.2.3 Generate relevant questions about readings on issues that can be researched.	<p>A How often does my computer program require a new password?</p> <p>B In what year was the use of passwords first offered in a computer program?</p> <p>C Do I have to use a password to do research in the library?</p> <p>D What are the advantages and disadvantages of using passwords to protect information?</p>

CAHSEE test questions in this standard require students to identify appropriate research questions for a topic or to identify questions of appropriate scope for student research papers. Test questions are based on informational or literary texts.

The sample test question is based on the passage “How to Choose a Password,” which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. The focus of this question and other questions for this standard, is the appropriateness of research questions, not simply whether or not the question can be answered by some kind of research. Students should be able to determine when questions are too idiosyncratic or personal, too broad, or too narrow to be developed into a successful research paper. Choice A represents a choice that is too narrow for development; the answer to the question would be a simple time reference. This choice could be an appropriate research question if it included a wider range of inquiry, e.g., why a new password would be required or how the program processes a new password. Choices B and C are similar to A in that they require a simple fact for an answer and thus are not broad enough for research. Choice D, the correct response, fulfills the requirements, as it represents an issue that is drawn from a reading passage and is also appropriate for student research, as this standard requires.

Strand	Reading Comprehension	Which of the following BEST summarizes the information in the article?
Standard	10.2.4 Synthesize the content from several sources or works by a single author dealing with a single issue; paraphrase the ideas and connect them to other sources and related topics to demonstrate comprehension.	<p>A The brain, even when damaged, can recover if the other side takes over.</p> <p>B Though the right brain controls the left side of the body, it is also capable of dominating the left brain.</p> <p>C The brain consists of two hemispheres which, though connected, serve different purposes.</p> <p>D The effects of split-brain surgery can be dramatic, though not tragic.</p>

CAHSEE test questions in this standard require students to synthesize ideas that are not explicitly connected within a text or between texts. Test questions will require students to connect ideas across two informational or persuasive texts on the same topic or to connect ideas contained in different sections of a single text. Other test questions will require students to connect ideas in a text with additional source material supplied with the test question, such as a quotation, chart, graph, or map.

Some test questions for this standard may require students to connect information in different sections of a single text in order to make inferences about the following implicit relationships: sequencing, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, part and whole. Other questions may require students to use different parts of a text to infer main idea(s) or to recognize accurate summary or paraphrase. Students are not required to bring specific background knowledge to these tasks. Test questions are based on either informational or literary texts.

The sample test question is based on the passage “A Brain Divided,” which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. The question requires students to demonstrate their ability in a foundational skill for this standard: determining an accurate summary of a given text. The correct answer, choice C, is stated at the end of the first paragraph of the passage. Students should verify that this statement summarizes the article by relating it to information in the rest of the passage, determining, for example, that the second and third paragraphs explain the functions of each side of the brain, and the final two paragraphs

discuss specific evidence for the different functions and explain how one side of the brain can take over the function of the other when needed. Choice A is an accurate restatement of the concluding paragraph, where summary statements often are found. However, the idea of one side taking over the functions of the other is not discussed in other sections of the article. Similarly, choice B is implied by the concluding paragraph of the passage but is not discussed throughout the article. Choice D is a summary of the fifth paragraph but is not a topic in other parts of the article.

Practice in analyzing the structure of a passage and determining connections among ideas are underlying, foundational skills necessary for full mastery of this standard. Other CAHSEE questions for this standard address the student's ability to synthesize ideas between and among related texts.

Strand	Reading Comprehension	Based on information in the document, which statement about passwords is accurate?
Standard	10.2.5	
	Extend ideas presented in primary or secondary sources through original analysis, evaluation, and elaboration.	<p>A Computer programs cannot be protected by passwords.</p> <p>B Passwords may not be used as a security measure in the future.</p> <p>C People only need to use one password for different systems.</p> <p>D Bad passwords could give access to unauthorized individuals.</p>

The focus of this standard is the student's ability to analyze, evaluate, or elaborate on ideas in a text. CAHSEE test questions in this standard require students to demonstrate their ability in one of several ways: to draw a logical conclusion from information presented in the text, to make predictions based on the text, to understand the support for ideas presented in the text, or to determine the method the author uses to organize and develop a topic or a section of text. Students are not required to bring specific background knowledge to these tasks. Test questions are based on informational or literary texts.

The sample test question is based on the passage "How to Choose a Password," which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. In asking students to find an accurate statement about the passage, the question requires them to analyze and elaborate upon the main idea—that it is important to create good passwords. Thus choice D is the correct response, since it draws a logical conclusion from the main idea, that using poor passwords could give unauthorized individuals access to personal information. Choice A is not an accurate analysis because the first paragraph of the passage indicates that passwords protect many different kinds of computer-based information. Choice B cannot be correct because the passage provides no justification for predictions about the future. Choice C represents a misreading of the text rather than an analysis of the information.

It is important to note that this CAHSEE test question measures student achievement of this standard at a foundational level. Other questions written for this standard may require a greater degree of analysis and inference. See Appendix E for a chart of the progression of these concepts within the California content standards.

Strand	Reading Comprehension	This document provides the MOST information on —
Standard	10.2.7 Critique the logic of functional documents by examining the sequence of information and procedures in anticipation of possible reader misunderstandings.	<p>A how to satisfy diners.</p> <p>B how to get along with coworkers.</p> <p>C the restaurant’s special offers.</p> <p>D the restaurant’s payment policy.</p>

CAHSEE test questions for standard 10.2.7 are based on functional passages such as written instructions, advertisements, workplace documents, and consumer documents. Some questions may require students to evaluate the organizational structure and the completeness of information in a passage. Other questions may require students to identify aspects that would make the passage easier to understand, to identify the topic on which the passage provides the most or least amount of information, or to determine the kind of support the author provides for his or her arguments (e.g., quotations from authorities, personal experience, summary of research reports, personal opinion).

The sample test question is based on the passage “Staff Responsibilities,” which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. The question focuses on the main point of this functional document, which is a foundational skill for achievement on this content standard. Students must examine the logic of the entire presentation to determine its overall goal and then to determine which of the four answer choices is the primary focus. Choice A, how to satisfy diners, is the correct response, and the other three choices represent topics contained within the document but not its main focus.

Strand	Reading Comprehension	What information supports the idea that vitamin supplements are potentially dangerous?
Standard	10.2.8	
	Evaluate the credibility of an author's argument or defense of a claim by critiquing the relationships between generalizations and evidence, the comprehensiveness of evidence, and the way in which the author's intent affects the structure and tone of the text (e.g., in professional journals, editorials, political speeches, primary source material).	<p>A Supplements are usually available in powder, tablet, and liquid form.</p> <p>B People might accidentally take supplements that interfere with medications.</p> <p>C Supplements may play a large role in disease prevention.</p> <p>D People tend to be too cautious when using supplements.</p>

CAHSEE test questions for standard 10.2.8 require students to analyze underlying relationships between assertions and evidence. Students must also be able to analyze the author's purpose and its effect on the text. Test questions may focus on the main point(s) of the argument, the supporting evidence for the main point(s), the quality of the author's arguments or positions, the purpose of the text, the tone, or the identification of opinion as opposed to fact. Test questions are based either on persuasive texts or on expository texts that support an argument or position. The passages focus on issues that are important to young adults, and the texts are presented in familiar formats (e.g., letter to the editor, editorials, speeches, excerpts from textbooks). In some instances, both sides of an argument or issue may be presented in separate passages.

The sample test question is based on the passage "Pro and Con on Vitamin Supplements," which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. The question requires students to analyze the support an author offers for a key assertion—that vitamin supplements may be dangerous rather than beneficial. This assertion is found in the second half of the passage and is supported by several statements in the passage, one of which is choice B, that some vitamins may actually interfere with a person's medications. The other answer choices for this test question repeat statements that do not support the specific assertion. Although it is factual that supplements come in a variety of forms (choice A), students should recognize that this statement does not support the assertion stated in the stem. Choice C actually supports the opposite assertion, as it provides support for taking supplements. Choice D represents a possible misreading of the stem, as it tends to support the idea that supplements are beneficial, rather than harmful.

The Literary Response and Analysis Strand

To demonstrate achievement in this CAHSEE strand, students must be able to comprehend and analyze literary texts, focusing on the important literary elements that form the basis of instruction in literature during middle school and high school.

Students should be familiar with the genres of dramatic literature named in the grades 9/10 California content standards (comedy, tragedy, dramatic monologue), as well as the genres that are the focus of the content standards in preceding grades (e.g., short story, novel, novella, essay, ballad, couplet, and sonnet). Students should also understand the meaning and use of specific characteristics of dramatic literature, including dialogue, soliloquy, and asides.

Test questions within the Literary Response and Analysis strand will focus on other aspects of the study and interpretation of literary works. For example, students should understand the important aspects of characterization in dramatic and other fictional literature. Students should be able to determine what characters are like, how the author reveals characterization, how characters interact to affect the plot, and how characters function as foils within a given work. Students should also be able to analyze other aspects of plot, including an author's manipulation of time sequence and the foreshadowing of events to come. Test questions will also address other aspects of critical reading: interpreting nuances of meaning, analyzing the use of literary devices such as metaphor and symbolism, recognizing thematic elements, and understanding subtle aspects that require attentive reading of a literary work.

The following pages discuss the 12 California content standards in the Literary Response and Analysis strand on the CAHSEE.

Strand	Literary Response and Analysis	How does the reader know that the story is a dramatic monologue?
Standard	10.3.1 Articulate the relationship between the expressed purposes and the characteristics of different forms of dramatic literature (e.g., comedy, tragedy, drama, dramatic monologue).	<p>A The narrator is the only speaker.</p> <p>B The story is about the narrator’s love of acting.</p> <p>C The narrator has a vivid personality.</p> <p>D The story is based on the narrator’s experiences.</p>

CAHSEE test questions in this standard require students to demonstrate knowledge of the characteristics of literary genres and their purposes. Because the focus of the grades 9 and 10 standards is dramatic literature, test questions will require students to recognize different forms of dramatic literature (e.g., comedy, tragedy, and dramatic monologue) and to use their knowledge of the purpose of these genres to aid understanding. However, because various genres are introduced in the content standards throughout the middle school and high school years, test questions that address the characteristics of different forms of fiction and poetry, e.g., short story, novel, novella, essay, ballad, couplet, epic, sonnet, will also be included on the CAHSEE. In addition, literary nonfiction genres will be addressed (e.g., essay, autobiography, biography). Students are asked to recognize the purpose and use of the genres named above, but to label only those that are most common. Test questions are based on literary texts, including stories, poems, and dramatic literature, as well as literary nonfiction texts.

The sample test question is based on the passage “Acting Up,” which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. The question focuses on dramatic monologue as a genre. Students should know the characteristics of this genre in both prose and poetry, including choice A, that there is a single speaker. The other answer choices for this test question accurately describe certain aspects of the passage, but they are not characteristics of the genre named in the stem. Students should recognize that choice B, that the story is about the narrator’s love of acting, could apply to several other literary genres, as could choices C and D.

Strand	Literary Response and Analysis	How does Marco's family react to his use of proverbs?
Standard	10.3.3 Analyze interactions between main and subordinate characters in a literary text (e.g., internal and external conflicts, motivations, relationships, influences) and explain the way those interactions affect the plot.	<p>A His parents are surprised; his sister is upset.</p> <p>B His parents are irritated; his sister is impressed.</p> <p>C His parents are entertained; his sister is annoyed.</p> <p>D His parents are disturbed; his sister is encouraging.</p>

CAHSEE test questions for standard 10.3.3 focus on characterization in literary texts. Students should be able to analyze the interactions between or among characters and to determine the relationships between character interactions and plot. In order to understand how characterization relates to plot, students should also possess foundational knowledge about the significant aspects of plot, including problem, conflict, and resolution. Some CAHSEE test questions will focus on the basic aspects of plot when they are important to an understanding of character interactions. Test questions for this standard are based on literary texts, including stories, poems, and dramatic literature, as well as literary nonfiction texts. Informational passages are used if they contain the qualities appropriate to the standard.

The sample test question is based on the passage "A Word in the Hand," which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. The question asks students to examine the interactions between Marco and his sister and between Marco and his parents in the context of his new-found habit of quoting familiar sayings. Students should be able to find textual evidence for character interactions, noting, for example, that the sister's attitude is indicated in her request that Marco be quiet, using a tone that is "anything but polite." The amused attitude of Marco's parents is indicated in the contrast between their stern and strict quotation of their own sayings and their laughter immediately thereafter.

Strand	Literary Response and Analysis	Why does the narrator take a walk on the day before the family moves?
Standard	10.3.4 Determine characters' traits by what the characters say about themselves in narration, dialogue, dramatic monologue, and soliloquy.	<p>A to take one last look at everything familiar</p> <p>B to visit the statue in the middle of town</p> <p>C to see if the same people are still in the same places</p> <p>D to be away from home when the movers come</p>

CAHSEE test questions in this standard require students to understand and analyze character traits and motivations in dramatic literature. Questions may also focus on characters' states of mind, as revealed by their own statements. Because the California English language arts content standards for earlier grades focus on other literary genres in addition to drama, the CAHSEE test questions related to this standard may also be based on other literary texts, including stories, poems, and literary nonfiction texts. In literary nonfiction, items may require the student to understand or analyze the person who is the focus of the passage. Informational passages may be used if they contain the qualities appropriate to the standard.

The sample test question is based on the passage "Going Home," which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. The question asks students to determine the narrator's motivation based on his own words in the story. Students should recognize that by emphasizing the routine of his walk to school in the early part of the story, the narrator is establishing both his love of his home town and his personal routine. The story is structured around three such walks, and the third one logically represents choice A, a desire to take a final look at familiar landmarks. Choice B represents a misreading of the text; the student may mistake characteristics of the new town for those of the old. Choice C requires that students read critically to understand the narrator's motive not as curiosity but as a desire to say good-bye. Students should recognize choice D as an effect rather than a cause; the narrator was indeed away from home when the movers arrived, but his walk had a different motivation.

Strand	Literary Response and Analysis	Which statement BEST describes what happens in the story?
Standard	10.3.5 Compare works that express a universal theme and provide evidence to support the ideas expressed in each work.	<p>A A teacher nurtures a talented writer.</p> <p>B A teacher gives students an impossible assignment.</p> <p>C A student avoids classwork by daydreaming.</p> <p>D A student gains confidence in his abilities by performing.</p>

CAHSEE test questions in this standard require students to understand and analyze literary themes. Students may be asked to identify the theme or to determine which sections of the passage support or state the theme. Determining the main idea of a literary text may also be assessed under this standard as a foundational skill, i.e., helping students analyze theme. In order to understand theme, students should also understand mood when it is central to the understanding of theme. Accordingly, some test questions for this standard may ask students to identify the mood of a text, when it is closely related to the theme, as a foundational skill. Students will not be required to bring specific background knowledge of other literary works to the tasks. Test questions for this standard are based on literary texts, including stories, poems, and dramatic literature, as well as literary nonfiction texts. Informational passages may be used if they contain the qualities appropriate to the standard. In some cases, test questions will be based on two literary texts or a literary text and an informational text that deal with a similar theme.

The sample test question is based on the passage “Acting Up,” which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. The question measures achievement in a foundational skill for standard 10.3.5, as it focuses on the main idea, and Choice D, the correct answer, captures the essence of the monologue, as the narrator introduces and then retells the day in which he became a “hit” and gained confidence as an actor. Choice A is partially correct, as the narrator reports that his teacher Mrs. Spector helped him select a monologue and was responsible for his “big break.” However, this choice is not an overarching summary of the events of the story. Similarly, Choice C is partially correct because the narrator does describe himself as daydreaming in the first paragraph, but, like choice A, it does not describe the essence of the story. Choice B represents a misreading of the text.

Strand	Literary Response and Analysis	What does the use of flashbacks accomplish in “Acting Up”?
Standard	10.3.6 Analyze and trace an author’s development of time and sequence, including the use of complex literary devices (e.g., foreshadowing, flashbacks).	<p>A makes the narrator seem dreamy and unrealistic</p> <p>B shows the reader what the narrator was like as a child</p> <p>C allows the narrator to list his achievements</p> <p>D gives the reader more insight into the narrator’s character</p>

CAHSEE test questions for this standard require students to analyze an author’s development of time and sequence. Students are asked to recognize the purpose or use of literary devices related to time and sequence, but to label only those that are most common, such as foreshadowing and flashback. Students may be asked what happens first, second, or last in the text, what kind of literary device is illustrated by the text, what effect the author creates by using the device, or what section of the text is an example of a specific literary device. Test questions are based on stories, poems, and dramatic literature, as well as literary nonfiction texts. Informational passages may be used if they contain the qualities appropriate to the standard.

The sample test question is based on the passage “Acting Up,” which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. The question focuses on the author’s use of the literary device of the flashback. Students should know the meaning of this term and recognize it as a manipulation of time within literary texts. In this instance, students should recognize that the flashback allows the narrator to describe not only the events of a past day but also his own reaction to them, thus giving the reading insight into his character (choice D). Choice A cannot represent the purpose of the flashback because the narrator represents himself as realistic about his appearance (“I was no heartthrob”) as well as his ability to sing and dance (“enthusiasm is my real talent”). Students who have understood the time sequences in the narrative, as required by standard 10.3.6, will determine that the flashback focuses on the narrator’s senior year in high school rather than his childhood (choice B). Choice C represents a misreading of the purpose of the flashback as an opportunity to record achievements rather than to retell an event.

Strand	Literary Response and Analysis	What is the main effect produced by the repetition of the phrase <i>Write something</i> ?
Standard	10.3.7 Recognize and understand the significance of various literary devices, including figurative language, imagery, allegory, and symbolism, and explain their appeal.	<p>A It reminds the reader that the narrator is daydreaming.</p> <p>B It proves that the narrator has finished his homework.</p> <p>C It emphasizes the importance that writing has to an actor.</p> <p>D It makes the story easier for the reader to understand.</p>

CAHSEE test questions for standard 10.3.7 require students to identify or analyze an author's use of the following literary devices: analogy, metaphor, simile, imagery, repetition, allegory, symbolism, and personification. Students are asked to identify a sentence or phrase as an example of a specific literary device or to recognize the purpose or use of a literary device, but they are asked to label only those that are most common. Test questions are based on literary texts, including stories, poems, and dramatic literature, as well as literary nonfiction texts. Informational passages may be used if they contain the qualities appropriate to the standard.

The sample test question is based on the passage "Acting Up," which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. The question requires students to determine the purpose of the literary device of repetition as used in this monologue. In the opening paragraphs, the narrator states that his teacher was telling him to write a response to what he had read, and the repetition of the sentence indicates that the narrator has continued to daydream instead of writing (choice A). Choices B and C represent misreadings of the text, as neither interpretation is supported by textual evidence. Students may recognize that choice D represents a logical purpose for the use of repetition, but students who read closely will realize that it is not the primary purpose within this passage.

Strand	Literary Response and Analysis	Read this sentence from the selection.
Standard	10.3.8	<div>...I know that somewhere there are parents telling their children about a town filled with oak trees, a place where you can get the best milkshake in the world...</div>
Interpret and evaluate the impact of ambiguities, subtleties, contradictions, ironies, and incongruities in a text.		What makes the preceding statement ironic?
		A the fact that, like the narrator, other children are worried about moving
		B the fact that, like the people in the narrator's neighborhood, most people enjoy their homes
		C the fact that, like the narrator's father, parents often get promotions
		D the fact that, like the narrator's home, every house has its stories.

The focus of test questions for this standard is the recognition and analysis of ambiguities, subtleties, contradictions, ironies, and incongruities in literary texts. These aspects of literature require attentive, critical reading of texts. The CAHSEE test questions will require students to understand and analyze these aspects within a passage but not to label them. Test questions are based on literary texts, including stories, poems, and dramatic literature, as well as literary nonfiction texts. Informational passages may be used if they contain the qualities appropriate to the standard.

The sample test question is based on the passage "Going Home," which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. Students should understand the concept of situational irony as contradictory or incongruous events within a story. The stem of the test question gives students an excerpt from the passage and asks for an explanation of the irony it expresses. The question requires students to analyze the irony in terms of the story as a whole. Choice A is the best response, as the irony lies in the fact that the narrator is sorry to leave the town at the same time that other children are worried about moving to the same town. Choices B, C, and D provide statements that represent misreadings of the excerpt or a lack of understanding of the relationship of the excerpt to the passage.

Strand	Literary Response and Analysis	Which word BEST describes the narrator's tone in the second half of the passage?
Standard	10.3.9 Explain how voice, persona, and the choice of a narrator affect characterization and the tone, plot, and credibility of a text.	<p>A persuasive</p> <p>B humorous</p> <p>C sarcastic</p> <p>D frustrated</p>

CAHSEE test questions in this standard focus on the person who tells the story or acts as the speaker within a text, whether the genre is short story, drama, poetry, or other kinds of literature. Students should be able to recognize who the narrator or speaker is, what persona he or she has been given, and what characteristics distinguish the narrator's or speaker's voice. Test questions in this strand will also require students to analyze the effect of these elements within the text. Because a foundational understanding of tone and literary point of view are necessary for achievement of this content standard, test questions may also assess students' understanding of tone and literary point of view when they are closely related to the voice or the narration. Students will need to understand the purpose of voice, persona, and choice of narrator but will not be required to label them. Test questions are based on literary texts, including stories, poems, and dramatic literature, as well as literary nonfiction texts. Informational passages may be used if they contain the qualities appropriate to the standard.

The sample test question is based on "A Day Away," which is reproduced in Appendix C. Students are asked to identify the tone of the passage, which in this passage is closely linked with the persona of the speaker. Students should recognize that the essay has two major parts. In the first half, the speaker describes, in a fairly dispassionate tone, what it means to take "a day away." In the second half, the speaker addresses the reader and argues that other people should also take a day away. The diction and tone become persuasive (e.g., "Each of us needs to withdraw from the cares which will not withdraw from us"), making choice A correct. Students should recognize that choices B and A are incorrect because the speaker is presenting a serious argument, advocating a position and countering what "many may think and some will accuse." Choice D represents a misinterpretation of the tone: the speaker implies that a day away helps resolve frustrations, but the diction of the essay does not create a tone of frustration.

Strand	Literary Response and Analysis	What does the author emphasize by having the narrator see the same people three different times in the story?
Standard	10.3.10 Identify and describe the function of dialogue, scene designs, soliloquies, asides, and character foils in dramatic literature.	<p>A that the narrator feels at home in this town because nothing ever changes</p> <p>B that the narrator’s life is repetitive and boring because nothing ever changes</p> <p>C that the new town the family is moving to will have similar people to meet</p> <p>D that the new children who move to the narrator’s house will become comfortable in it</p>

CAHSEE test questions in standard 10.3.10 require students to use their understanding of genre features to aid in the understanding and analysis of literary texts. Because the focus of the grade 10 standard is dramatic literature, many test questions require students to understand and to analyze the dramatic features named in the standard: dialogue, soliloquy, asides, character foils, and scene design. However, because various genres are studied throughout the middle school and high school years, some items will be included that address the features of fiction and poetry, such as setting, methods of characterization, line length, punctuation, rhythm, repetition, rhyme, problem, conflict, climax, and resolution. Students will need to understand the purpose or use of these genre features but to label only those that are most common. Test questions are based on literary texts, including stories, poems, and dramatic literature, as well as literary nonfiction texts. Informational passages may be used if they contain the qualities appropriate to the standard.

The sample test question is based on the passage “Going Home,” which is reproduced in Appendix C of this guide. The stem of the question asks students to determine the effect of the author’s use of repetition, which is a common feature of the short story and other literary genres. To select the correct answer, students must understand the meaning of the story and how the repetition reinforces that meaning. Choice A is the best response, because the point of the repetition is to show how much the unvarying routine makes the narrator feel at home. Choice B is not supported by the text; the narrator is not bored but comforted by the repetition, as illustrated by the first two paragraphs of the story. In addition, the text shows the narrator feeling bored only after learning that the familiar

routine is coming to an end. Choice C also lacks support from the text. The narrator learns that with the exception of the oak trees the new town will be different from the old and begins to speculate about the new features. Choice D represents a misreading of the purpose of the repetition; the narrator's feelings are the focus of these events, rather than the new children moving into the town.

Strand Literary Response and Analysis**Standard 8.3.7 Analyze a work of literature, showing how it reflects the
heritage, traditions, attitudes, and beliefs of its author.
(Biographical approach)**

CAHSEE test questions in this standard require students to analyze a work in relation to the author's background. Context information is provided with the questions so that students will not need specific prior knowledge about the author. In order to analyze a work using the biographical approach, the student is required to understand basic elements of theme, setting, plot, and character as they relate to the author's background, and these literary elements may be the focus of test questions in this standard. The questions are based on literary texts, including stories, poems, and dramatic literature, as well as literary nonfiction texts. Informational passages may be used if they contain the qualities appropriate to the standard.

Strand	Literary Response and Analysis
Standard	10.3.11 Evaluate the aesthetic qualities of style, including the impact of diction and figurative language, on tone, mood, and theme, using the terminology of literary criticism. (Aesthetic approach)

CAHSEE test questions in this standard require students to analyze an author's style, noting how his or her use of diction affects the tone, mood, or theme of the text. Because an understanding of tone, mood, and theme is fundamental to achievement in this standard, test questions may ask students about these literary elements in a passage. Test questions are based on literary texts, including stories, poems, and dramatic literature, as well as literary nonfiction texts. Informational passages may be used if they contain the qualities appropriate to the standard.

Strand	Literary Response and Analysis
Standard	10.3.12 Analyze the way in which a work of literature is related to the themes and issues of its historical period. (Historical approach)

CAHSEE test questions for this standard require students to analyze a text in relation to the historical period in which it was written or in which it is set. Context information is provided so that students will not need specific prior knowledge about the historical period. In order to analyze a work using the historical approach, students are required to understand basic elements of theme, setting, plot, and character, and test questions may address these literary elements when they relate to the historical period reflected in the text. Test questions are based on literary texts, including stories, poems, and dramatic literature, as well as literary nonfiction texts. Texts may include those written during a prior historical period or those set in a prior historical period (historical fiction). Informational passages may be used if they contain the qualities appropriate to the standard.